



Expression of Interest to serve as Business Plan Assessor

Project/Consultancy Title:	Business Plan Assessor
Project Location(s):	Montserrado, Bong, and Nimba Counties, Liberia
Number of positions:	1 Audit/Business Development Firm
Duration:	One (1) Month

About Mercy Corps:

Mercy Corps is a leading global humanitarian agency saving and improving lives in the world's toughest places. With a network of experienced professionals in more than 40 countries, we partner with local communities to put bold ideas into action to help people recover, overcome hardship and build better lives now, and for the future. In these places, Mercy Corps listen to local voices to prioritize people's most urgent need, taking a long-term view and promoting innovative solutions that drive true change. Mercy Corps Liberia has been working in Liberia since 2002 with focus on youth, agriculture, livelihoods, conflict resolution and emergency response.

Background:

Promoting Sustainable Partnerships for Economic Transformation (PROSPECTS), is a three-year youth livelihood and empowerment program created to respond to the unemployment and livelihood challenges youth face in Liberia. As one of its components, the Social Business Employment Grant aimed at providing 25 private sector innovative businesses broken into: 15 small and medium to growth stage private sector companies; and 10 start-up companies (co-sponsored by the Ministry of Commerce flagship program, E+). with financial and business advisory support towards sustained business development and growth to create youth employment and mitigate labor market failures. PROSPECTS realized that the private sector is the primary driver of employment in an economy and small-and-medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) can serve as the main labor market entry point for youth and other marginalized segments of the population in Liberia. Over the last 12 months of the program implementation, the first round of Request for Application (RFA) for the Social Business Grant was launched and 12 businesses (10 Entrepreneurship + and 2 Social Business) were awarded grants ranging from \$8,500.00 to about \$20,000.00 to support business activities in four key areas of Agriculture, Information Technology (ICT), E-Commerce and Service.

This second round of RFA launch will provide grants up to \$20,000 for thirteen (13) private sector businesses. The grant aims to finance and support businesses operating in the following sectors: Green energy, especially solar; Agriculture with specific focus on food production, processing, and packaging; Youth information and job matching services; and innovative service business that provides high employment opportunities for youths.

Consultant Task:

Mercy Corps Liberia is seeking to recruit either qualified private sector Auditing or a Business development firm, to serve as the **ASSESSOR** responsible to review and score up to 200 applications/proposals from locally-owned Liberian businesses applying for the second round of its Social Business Employment Grant scheme.



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The consultant will be required to evaluate and shortlist businesses applying for the social business grant. The applications should be evaluated for the extent to which they demonstrate:

- **Innovation**: Proposed solutions must clearly address a gap in the youth unemployment market through innovative approaches.
- **Impact**: Proposed solutions must demonstrate cost-effective and positive social impact. This impact could be demonstrated in variety of ways including but not limited to: number of youth viably equipped with information services / engaged in the development of information services through newspapers, online media, and/or social media; number of youth connected with gainful employment opportunities through cost-effective vetting and job matching practices; number of youth whose capacity is built through the development and delivery of viable and industry-led trainings and curricula.
- **Sustainability**: Proposed solutions should demonstrate sustainability beyond the grant funding cycle. Business models should demonstrate ability to leverage additional capital, particularly from other private sector companies including multi-nationals.
- **Replication and commercial viability**: Proposed projects must be poised for commercial viability and demonstrate potential for replication of innovative products and services that support increased employment for youth.

Key Responsibilities

Consultants will be expected to execute the following activities using Mercy Corps Social Business Guidelines:

- Review and assess business proposals/applications packages, long list applications in terms of the four key points – innovation, impact, sustainability and commercial viability considering specific geographies – and make recommendations to the Social Business (SB) team.
- Serve as judges on a panel of 3 or 5 person during business pitching competition for shortlisted candidates
- Score business proposals and pitching/presentations and make recommendations to SB team for final shortlisted candidates for due diligence and subsequent grant awarding.
- Prepare a detailed report of the evaluation process including processes, key challenges and recommendations if any and report to the Program Manager
- Coordinate with and request support from social business team as and when necessary.

The Consultant will report to:

Program Manager

The Consultant will work closely with:

Social Business Manager, Social Business Coordinators

Evaluators to be recruited should possess the below qualifications.



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Requirements for firms

- Must be an Audit/Accounting or Business Development firm or equivalent
- Should be legally registered and licensed to operate in Liberia with at least 2 years of experience in evaluating business proposal/ operations
- Proven research and market survey experience with SMEs in Liberia
- Excellent understanding of the Liberian business environment.
- Ability and willingness to travel Gbarnga, Nimba and Montserrado to conduct evaluations
- Experience with business development and advisory support for small and medium sized firms
- At least 2 senior managers possessing advance qualifications in a Business development related area
- Strong Organizational capacity and technical knowhow to develop internal capacity of small and medium-sized businesses
- Reasonable Cost for rendering services that will reflect ‘value for money’

Document Submission

All interested firms should kindly submit the below listed documents and attached annexes in one Portable Document Format, PDF, and with the subject line “**Business Plan Assessor Consultant**” to lr-jobs@merycorps.org or in hardcopy addressed and delivered to Mercy Corps Liberia’s office, Sophie Junction Opposite SOS Clinic, Oldest Congo Town, Monrovia, Liberia by 4: 00pm Local time on January 25, 2019.

- Cover letter outlining capacities and experience with availability and fees
- Preliminary Evaluation Plan – Providing clear, detailed approach and method to be used in evaluating business plans/proposals (three pages)
- CV/s of key persons

Note: Applications coming in after the deadline will not be considered.



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Price Offer (Annex 1)

No.	Description of Item	Quantity	Unit	Unit Price	Total Price
	Total before Tax				
	VAT (if applicable)				
	Total				



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Submission Checklist (Annex 2)

Kindly ensure that all the annex templates including this are filled and submitted with your offer documents. A full offer package should include the following documents:

- Expression of interest or Cover letter
- Preliminary Evaluation plan
- CV/s of key staff
- Annex 1: Price Offer Sheet
- Annex 2: Submission Checklist
- Annex 3: Declaration Letter
- Official proof of business registration / articles of incorporation in Liberia
- Official Tax Clearance Certificates from the Liberia Ministry of Finance
- Three (3) client references that include name of client business, full name of point-of-contact, telephone number, address, dates for work performed

The applicant certifies the submission of a complete offer package inclusive of the documents outlined above, as relevant to our company and application.

Full Individual/Company Name: _____

Name and Title of Company's Authorized Signatory: _____

Signature: _____



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Declaration Letter (Annex 3)

[Company Name]

[Full Address]

Mercy Corps Liberia
Sophie Junction, Opposite SOS Clinic, Tubman Boulevard
Monrovia, Liberia

[Name of Company] is pleased to submit the enclosed Technical and Financial application in reference to the Request for Proposal (RFP) for Consultants to evaluate business plan/proposal for the Social Business Employment Grant Scheme dated [insert date]. [Name of company] certifies that all information and statements made in this Application are true and correct to the best of our knowledge and any false statements may lead to disqualification of our proposal offer.

[Name of Company] certifies that the company/individual is in good financial standing with no outstanding bankruptcy or active litigation that could hinder normal business operations. [Name of Company] has read, understood, and accepts the terms and conditions as outlined in the aforementioned Request for Proposal. [Name of Company] certifies our ability to comply with the requirements as outlined in the scope of work.

All costs associated with the preparation and submission of this proposal offer are the responsibility of [name of company] regardless of the outcome of the decision rendered by the Evaluation Committee.

Company Name: _____

Name and Title of Company's Authorized Signatory: _____

Signature: _____

Contact Details: _____